

..Title

Resolution to recommend Parks & Recreation staff assess the feasibility of a partnership with Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center for the development of a boathouse on City park property.

..Memorandum

Attached for your review and action is a resolution to recommend that Parks & Recreation staff assess the feasibility of a partnership with Skyline Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center for the development of a boathouse on park property.

Project Description

Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center are currently housed at Concordia University of Ann Arbor. This site has been instrumental in the development of the Skyline Crew team that has provided opportunities to local students while fielding a championship-level program. The Washtenaw Rowing Center provides access to rowing for middle school aged students across the county.

With the impending changes at Concordia University, representatives from Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center are trying to find a new location for their facilities and programming, with the goal of developing a new long-term partnership for secure river access.

Parks & Recreation staff have been in conversations with these groups as there are similar arrangements for Ann Arbor Rowing Club, University of Michigan and the other Ann Arbor High programs at Bandemer Park. Through these conversations, staff have identified potential locations within the park system, such as a portion of Barton Nature Area. Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center have provided City staff with assurances of significant financial support for any capital projects associated with a new partnership and facility.

On January 28, 2025, representatives from Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center presented to the Park Advisory Commission about their anticipated need for a new location due to the uncertainty of their current location at Concordia University of Ann Arbor. Following this meeting, Parks & Recreation staff facilitated preliminary discussions with other City departments about the feasibility of a partnership and capital project.

Through these preliminary discussions, it was determined that a more comprehensive evaluation was necessary to assess the feasibility of the proposed partnership. This evaluation will require engagement with other City departments, such as legal, water treatment, planning, and public works, as well as other local agencies.

Staff recommends a holistic assessment of a partnership between the City, Skyline High School Crew, and Washtenaw Rowing Center, and the establishment of an official agreement with Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center to set expectations and responsibilities. Post-assessment, Parks & Recreation staff would report findings to the Park Advisory Commission by the end of the calendar year and bring any subsequent PAC recommendations to City Council for consideration.

..Body

Resolution to recommend Parks & Recreation staff assess the feasibility of a partnership with Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center for the development of a boathouse on City park property.

Whereas, On January 28, 2025, representatives from Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center presented to the Park Advisory Commission about their potential need for a new location due to the uncertainty of their current location at Concordia University of Ann Arbor;

Whereas, Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation staff have been in discussion with Skyline High School Crew and Washtenaw Rowing Center representatives about potential opportunities and locations within the Ann Arbor parks systems;

Whereas, Ann Arbor has agreements and leases with other local rowing programs for use of park properties;

Whereas, Parks & Recreation staff have had initial discussion regarding the possibility of utilizing the northeast portion of Barton Nature Area located east of the Barton Dam;

Whereas, further assessment of site suitability, programming needs, partnership terms, and overall process is needed to determine if the partnership is feasible;

Whereas, Parks & Recreation staff will solicit input from other city departments such as, but not limited to, water treatment, legal, planning, and public works, during the assessment;

RESOLVED, That Park Advisory Commission supports further assessment of feasibility for the development of a boathouse on park property by all necessary City staff;

RESOLVED, That Park Advisory Commission also supports the establishment of agreements between the City of Ann Arbor and appropriate parties related to assessing and defining terms for partnerships and process;

RESOVLED, That City staff will report back to Park Advisory Commission by the end of calendar year 2025 and provide staff recommendations;

RESOLVED, That City staff will bring any agreements deemed feasible by this assessment to the Park Advisory Commission for consideration and recommendation.